

LACRO Discussion Series: 3

**A New Research
Dialogue**

***Canadian and Latin American
Research Communities***

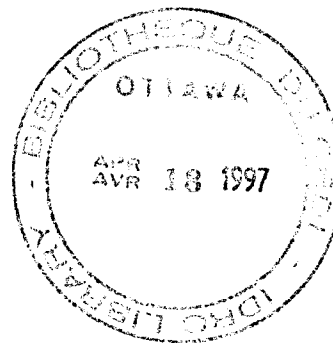
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LACRO Discussion Series

The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Office Discussion Series is intended to promote exchange and consultation on development issues.

The reports are neither official policy nor documentation of the International Development Research Centre but are intended to reflect a diversity of opinion about development issues in the Latin American and Caribbean Region.

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Of course, we also acknowledge the hospitality of the numerous Uruguayans and Chileans with whom we met and who took the time to share their experiences and questions with us. Their keen interest in our mission and, more particularly, in the future cooperation to which it may give rise must not go without response.

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ABBREVIATIONS

APEC	Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation
AUCC	Association of Universities & Colleges of Canada
CALACS	Canadian Association for Latin American and Caribbean Studies
CERLAC	Centre for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean
CINDA	Centro Interuniversitario de Desarrollo Andino
CONICYT	National Commission for Scientific and Technological Research (Chile)
CUPID	Canadian University Projects in International Development
FLACSO	Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales
FOCAL	The Canadian Foundation for the Americas
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IOHE	The Inter-American Organization for Higher Education
LACRO	Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Office
MERCOSUR	Mercado Común del Cono Sur
MRC	Medical Research Council of Canada
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NSERC	Natural Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada
OAS	Organization of American States
SSHRC	Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

1. INTRODUCTION

Many Latin American countries are undergoing rapid transformations which require an appropriate Canadian response if we are to strengthen relationships between our respective research communities. For productive relations to flourish in the future, much will depend on increasing familiarity with each other's research capacities, national circumstances and regional research affiliations.

It was with such a future in mind that those responsible for IDRC-LACRO and IDRC's Canadian Partners Initiatives invited AUCC to undertake a mission to Latin America. The mission's goal was to investigate the potential for broadening exchange partnerships between Canadian university researchers and their colleagues in the region. The investigation was further shaped by LACRO's interest in receiving comments on how the office and Latin Americans can play their part in building new exchange opportunities that will serve the development cause.

This was not a mission of experts on Latin America. It was carried out by an investigative team of institutional representatives committed to the idea that a dialogue with Latin American researchers should be open to non-specialists as well. The visit was undertaken by Jean-Pierre Lemasson (Université de Québec à Montréal), Gregg Macdonald (Simon Fraser University) and Eva Egron-Polak (AUCC). Christopher Smart of IDRC accompanied the group and attended most meetings. The institutions and individuals who met with the group were chosen through the joint efforts of LACRO, the Canadian Embassy in Chile and team members (Annex 1). Due to time constraints, the mission was limited to Montevideo (Uruguay) and Santiago (Chile).

1.1 Context

The impressions received and the conclusions reached were influenced by the "contextual realities" the team heard described during discussions. While definitive insights might be questionable from a single mission, it seems clear that national and regional circumstances must be considered when defining future possibilities for cooperation. The team's observations are offered below.

1.1.1 Canada

Few would dispute that Canadian universities are in a state of transition. Under-funded and under pressure to remain excellent and accessible, universities across the country are being asked to prove their relevance, improve their efficiency, and account for their actions. At an extreme, the autonomy of Canadian universities is becoming vulnerable while the options for effective institutional response are becoming more limited.

The influence of "globalization" on our universities' domestic role in human resource development underlines the need for extending Canadian university networks beyond our borders. This outreach is important to "internationalization" and is receiving growing attention on our campuses. But the means to promote the network of international contacts necessary to encourage internationalization are at risk as the resource base of Canadian universities contracts.

The negative consequences are far reaching and cumulative. Where choices about international joint research are made in disciplines other than those specializing in Latin America, opportunities to discuss the potential for collaboration are so infrequent that our researchers tend to seek partners in more accessible parts of the world. In turn, our absence from the research networks in which Latin Americans circulate reduces the likelihood that young Latin American scholars will choose Canadian universities to pursue post-graduate or post-doctoral study. Because the quality of their home institutions is often unknown to Canadian academics, their applications are less attractive to our faculty. Like their academic mentors, they take their talent elsewhere.

In Canada's foreign policy context, our membership in OAS, NAFTA and APEC places Latin America in general, and several countries in particular, high on our list of national priorities. Nevertheless, the value of academic exchange in cementing positive relationships has been neglected. Unless remedial steps are taken, this neglect will reduce our ability to seize available opportunities and the relationship between our research communities will remain undeveloped.

1.1.2 Latin America

The two countries visited present a useful contrast. They illustrate the shortcoming of viewing Latin America as a homogeneity of national characteristics or as a region moving in lock step through common stages of development. Some contextual elements follow:

- There is great diversity among Latin American countries; where Chile is experiencing economic expansion and growth, Uruguay appears to be reversing the development process.
- There is strong competition for resources among a large and growing number of research institutions in Chile; Uruguay's national university has only one official challenger to date.
- Resulting in part from the forced expatriation of many academic researchers during the hardship years of dictatorship, both countries have a research community with international links and international experience.
- With offers of academic linkages, academic mobility and collaborative research, both countries are being courted by the European Union and by its member countries.

- Regional integration (e.g., MERCOSUR, NAFTA) drives much of the planning behind international initiatives in Latin America. Networks of all kinds are being built among researchers and senior administrators (e.g., CINDA, Grupo Montevideo and others). In the case of Chile, universities are expanding their international connections by providing HRD assistance and advice to less-developed nations in their immediate region of the continent.
- Decentralization in the Chilean university system, based in part on a recognition of domestic regional needs, contrasts with the virtually mono-institutional system in Uruguay where some individuals are now calling for reform within their national university.
- Relationships with the productive sector are of high interest in both countries and are seen as a key to development.
- Low faculty salaries in Uruguay discriminate against full-time academic employment and limit university-based research efforts.
- In Chile, the existence of alternative research institutes (e.g., FLACSO and others) poses both a dilemma for the future (lack of resources) and a strength (independent, often action-oriented research).

Although differences can be found between Uruguayan and Chilean research communities, similarities are apparent as well. Ties with European colleagues, efforts to build regional networks, and a growing emphasis on cooperation with the productive sector have been mentioned. Equally important, researchers in both countries have a keen interest in becoming better acquainted with their Canadian counterparts -- when looking to the north for effective partnerships, all too often the lines of communication now end at the Canada-U.S. border.

The team was left with the impression that Latin American research institutions possess areas of strength offering significant reciprocal benefits to overseas researchers who affiliate with them. Given the potential for reciprocity, Canadian interests should be repositioned to capitalize on the opportunities for mutual advantage which are present.

1.1.3 IDRC's Role and the Development Context

The mission's objectives were built around IDRC's desire to explore its role in generating new partnerships and to do so in a manner consistent with IDRC's mandate. Three aspects of IDRC's changing organizational emphasis in Latin America should be noted:

1. As one outcome of IDRC's decentralization, LACRO has been given greater autonomy to identify, develop and support research activities in Latin America.

2. Greater recognition is being given to the value of interdisciplinary approaches to development problems and development practices. As a consequence, LACRO has adopted a focus on capacity building -- an approach which has implications for all those who participate in IDRC-sponsored activities.
3. The status and responsibilities given IDRC as an Agenda 21 agency following UNCED, have led LACRO to concentrate on environment-related issues and on the policy-making activities associated with them.

Accompanying this shift in organizational emphasis, LACRO and the Canadian Partners Initiatives within IDRC's Special Initiatives Program recognize the need to stimulate a general dialogue between researchers as a first step toward the specific activities needed to carry their mandate forward. While this willingness to play the part of catalyst is applauded, it is clear that IDRC is only one of many agencies intent on modifying the traditional strategies for cooperation. It is also clear that IDRC does not have the resources or the breadth of mission to effect wide-ranging changes on its own. Nevertheless, IDRC is a special case because it is the only Canadian agency whose vocation includes both research and development.

The issue for IDRC is not one of fundamental orientation so much as the deployment of new approaches to development cooperation. Members of the Canadian team concluded that joint research necessarily leads to development of all participants whenever research communities cooperate. In this sense, the promotion of cooperative research alliances contributes to the social, economic and cultural development of participating countries. This contribution holds true equally for basic and applied research, especially where national development involves the definition of research fields whose applications are likely to create goods or services. Reciprocity is at the heart of the process and co-development is the desired outcome. It is a commitment to the spirit and practice of co-development that should be promoted by IDRC as it plays its part in supporting a more expansive research dialogue.

2. PEOPLE AND PROCESS, NOT PROJECTS

Increased scholarly interaction between Canada and Latin America can be encouraged by first developing a collaborative agenda. The challenge lies in determining how a process can be constructed that will identify common ground and promote the personal connections which invigorate productive partnerships.

A number of observations on this subject emerged during the mission. It should be recognized, for example, that connections between the two communities are already established: individual researchers collaborate within their specialized fields; some individual projects continue to be funded by organizations such as IDRC, CIDA, and NSERC. IOHE, FOCAL and CERLAC also actively support ventures which link Canadian scholars with their Latin American counterparts. While these existing points of contact have real value and should be encouraged, introducing new

academic players to the possibilities of research cooperation and co-development is equally important -- an expanded dialogue is prerequisite to increasing the diversity of individual contacts already in place. By developing a process which fosters exchange between people, project opportunities will follow; by focusing more narrowly on specific project opportunities, the prospect of a more inclusive academic exchange will be constrained.

Two additional observations took shape during the mission. The first is built around the notion of long-term relationships. The second concerns the similarity of problems facing researchers and research institutions in Latin America and Canada.

It was repeatedly expressed that the two research communities should rely on personal relationships to establish partnerships which can be sustained over time. Just as frequently, attention was drawn to intergenerational equity -- student involvement was highlighted as an important way to build enduring linkages. Perhaps most persuasive in this regard was an intervention made by a group of graduate students in Physics from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile when they presented a set of proposals expressing their interest in contributing to the development of academic ties with Canada.

The graduate students argued for an effective student mobility program that would introduce Canadian students to research opportunities in their country while providing access to advanced technologies in Canadian laboratories for themselves. Joint degree programs, access to research information, and post-doctoral placement ranked high on their list of recommendations. Elsewhere during the mission, the substance of the Chilean students' request was reaffirmed with an emphasis on the long-term benefits that can flow from reciprocal student exchange.

When problems common to both research communities were identified, they went beyond a shared concern over the availability of funding support. It was evident that both Latin American and Canadian research institutions are coming to terms with the need to manage change as the relationship between academic institutions and the societies in which they reside comes under increasing scrutiny. Aside from responding to incursions into academic freedom and university autonomy, both research communities are devising ways to manage new approaches to interdisciplinary problems such as those posed by environmental degradation. They are exploring new approaches to sustainable resource management, searching for effective ways to inform debates surrounding public policy, and seeking solutions to regional problems. Both communities are attempting to draw on private sector resources to support university-based research and both communities are learning how to manage the new relationships which are evolving.

Shared problems offer the prospect of shared solutions. By establishing mechanisms which will allow Canadian and Latin American researchers to discuss common problems, isolation between the two communities will be reduced and the range of personal contacts will be expanded. As opportunities for mutual understanding and familiarity increase, the expertise of new participants will be drawn into the research dialogue and a broader range of individual projects and individual academic partnerships will likely result.

Expansion and broadening of contacts will require a greater focus on overcoming the language barrier as acquisition of at least minimal language skills is a prerequisite for all cooperation. While this was not discussed during the mission, improving language teaching and learning may itself in fact constitute an area of potential collaboration between Canada and Latin America.

3. INSTRUMENTS OF ACTION, WAYS AND MEANS

3.1 Resources

Despite the value in expanding the scope of research contact between Latin America and Canada, resource constraints are a reality. It follows that plans and proposed actions must be realistic and inventive when marshalling both human and financial resources.

It also follows that it would be unrealistic to assume that the funding currently available for research projects is sufficient to carry the enterprise forward. Additional funds will be required and new efforts will have to be made to convince government that investment in international research cooperation returns strategic benefits. Through their bilateral and multilateral activities, the Europeans are capturing the initiative in Latin America, presumably because the return for doing so is obvious. It is suggested that Canada should follow suit by giving financial support and encouragement to research collaboration as an element of geopolitical initiative.

While new sources of funding are needed, it will take time and lobbying to secure them. Rather than waiting patiently in the hope that resources will be forthcoming, it is proposed that Canadian researchers take the initiative by tapping the diversity of human and institutional resources currently available but under utilized. In Canada and in Latin America, many organizations actively promote research cooperation. These organizations offer a base on which to build future collaborative efforts if they can first be convinced to commit even marginal support for an expanded research dialogue. As communication between research communities intensifies, the possibility of mounting an effective lobby for additional funding should grow apace.

Some of the actors who can be counted to play an important role include:

Universities

Canadian universities house expertise on Latin America, including specialized programs in Latin American and Caribbean studies, languages and literature. Members of the Canadian Association of Latin American and Caribbean Studies are numerous and active in these programs. Many Canadian universities also count Latin American expatriate scholars among their faculty. The expertise already resident in our institutions will be instrumental in carrying the dialogue forward and in finding ways to make it more inclusive.

Scarce resources aside, Canadian universities have the capacity to accept Latin American graduate students and post-doctoral fellows into their research and study programs. Similarly, university-based researchers can turn for support to Canadian granting councils and other domestic research funding suppliers. And in much the same way that funds for visiting professorships are available in Canada to stimulate person-to-person contacts, Latin American universities also provide financial support for academic exchange.

The Canadian Government

The Canadian government's growing interest in Latin America is particularly important. Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada is intent on expanding both bilateral and multilateral trade relationships -- a commitment which the Canadian research community should be quick to draw upon. Discussions at the Canadian Embassy in Chile, for example, revealed a growing appreciation for the value of academic exchange.

Canadian studies programs, along with the Canadian government's interest in seeing them expand, offer another excellent resource for disseminating knowledge about Canada in Latin America and mobilizing Latin American interest in seeking out Canadian partners.

CIDA, with its bilateral programs in several Latin American countries, remains a central player and the University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development (UPCD) program in CIDA's Canadian Partnership Branch also offers an important source of funding.

IDRC

IDRC is a recognized and well-respected organization in both Canada and Latin America. Given the good will that has been built around IDRC's activities in the region, and as noted previously, the agency should be expected to play a key part in fashioning the strategic dialogue.

National Research Councils

In many Latin American countries, domestic policy is supporting research as a key to national development. Governments in Uruguay and Chile place a high priority on developing science and technology through support from their National Commissions for Scientific and Technological Research (CONICYT). By harnessing these resources alongside Canadian funding from NSERC, SSHRC and MRC, the prospect of acquiring additional funds for joint research could be very positive.

IOHE

The Inter-American Organization for Higher Education maintains an extensive and influential network across Canada and throughout most Latin American countries. Through its activities, IOHE has made Canadian universities highly visible and has served to promote a very strong pro-Canadian sentiment among senior higher education administrators.

FOCAL

FOCAL was created to establish lasting ties with Latin America and recognizes the need for a better informed public as a necessary ingredient in mobilizing regional interests.

The Canadian and Latin American Private Sectors

Collaborative partnerships with the private sector offer novel avenues for research support, including student research internships and cooperative education placements, research funding from Canadian business ventures operating in Latin America, and the possibility of attaching Canadian researchers to the collaborative partnerships between Latin American universities and private sector partners in their home countries.

Canadian companies operating in Latin America can gain significant good will by supporting joint research programs which link universities on the two continents, often receiving charitable tax concessions at the same time. Moreover, the private sector in Latin America is beginning to recognize the value of R & D investment; north-south research collaboration should hold an obvious appeal.

4. A THEMATIC APPROACH

4.1 General

The number of actors now on the scene is at once an asset and a problem. It is an asset for the obvious reason that the many agencies involved are eager to expand north-south ties. It is a problem because they tend to diffuse the Canadian commitment.

Although it might be reasonable to suggest that these organizations should work together in constructing a coherent approach, the likelihood of seeing such a recommendation implemented is not particularly high. As an alternative, it will be necessary to work around the margins by building upon existing commitments in innovative ways. Once again, the notions of innovation, partnership and co-development will be critical to success.

How, then, can we establish a process which will lead to greater understanding between researchers, stimulate new research partnerships, and acknowledge the mutual benefits of co-development as a desired outcome? Furthermore, how can we set about creating a process of this kind when the resources which do exist are limited and when their deployment is uncoordinated at present?

First and foremost, it is recommended that "thematic" areas should be designated within which progress appears most promising. Through the modest yet systematic reconfiguration of activities already in play, a sense of coherence could be brought to the exchange between Canadian and Latin American researchers -- a coherence that will grow as piecemeal resource support from

many sources consolidates under the thematic banners. As the process matures and strengthens, it can be expected to attract new sources of resource support.

4.2 Thematic Area One: Information Exchange

Information technology offers a cost-effective instrument for building future collaborative efforts and the open dissemination of information is a precondition for the development of research cooperation of every type. Some suggested mechanisms follow:

- Canadian data bases on research interests, capacity and projects should be made more accessible to Latin American colleagues. (The current efforts to place the AUCC's CUPID data base on IDRC's on-line systems is one example.)
- Information about the Canadian university community should be made available with the AUCC acting as an intermediary connecting Latin American research inquiries to appropriate Canadian university sources.
- Canadian universities should contribute to the development of the information resources in Latin America by providing training attachments for the librarians and technicians needed to manage the new information technology.
- Teleconferencing technology should be used to enable Canadian participation in the meetings of regional associations such as the Latin American Centre for Physics and the new Latin American/Caribbean Communication Network (a developing association of research mathematicians).
- While organizations other than IDRC have a part to play in facilitating access to electronic communications, IDRC/LACRO should act as coordinator and catalyst by overseeing the creation of new, shared data bases; maintaining monthly or quarterly electronic bulletin boards; sponsoring national or international research colloquia; and assisting centres of excellence in Latin America and Canada to become better informed about each other's work. As an immediate first step, LACRO should create computer conferences linking Canadian academics into existing Latin American/LACRO networks. This could be done by identifying a subject of special interest to LACRO (i.e., small and medium-sized business development, competitiveness, decentralization, etc.) and establishing a prototype computer conference as a test model.

4.3 Thematic Area Two: Researcher Exchange

By abandoning older models of development in favour of the co-development approach, all research participants should be expected to contribute funds according to their means. In this regard, support for research exchange is available in many Latin American countries. The CONICYT in Chile is investigating centres of excellence as part of its strategy to attract foreign research dollars and to enable Chilean scientists to take part in international collaborative

ventures. The CONICYT in Uruguay provides fees for visiting scholars and promotes foreign participation in the nation's research activities. Inter-American Bank loans, contributions from the European Community, research funding programs within individual universities, and the possibility of private sector funding, represent additional sources of support for international research cooperation.

Some specific suggestions to encourage research exchange are set out below:

- The conventional mechanisms for bringing researchers into contact should be more fully utilized, including sabbatical leave attachments, visiting professorships and research consultancies.
- Seed funding for two-way faculty travel provides an important stimulant to researcher contact. Organizations such as Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada, NSERC, IDRC, IOHE, and the Latin American CONICYTs should be encouraged to make travel grants available.
- LACRO's willingness to provide office and communication resources for visiting Canadian researchers at its offices in Montevideo should be advertised among Canadian researchers and the offer should be replicated by other Canadian agencies active in the region.
- LACRO's interest in promoting greater Canadian participation in IDRC-supported activities should be capitalized upon. Meetings sponsored by the agency, such as the meeting on interdisciplinarity which is being organized for February, 1995, offer special opportunities. Other than modest travel contributions, the only additional cost to greater Canadian involvement in LACRO-sponsored regional gatherings is the need for simultaneous translation services -- a reasonably modest expense.
- LACRO and other agencies should take steps to invite Canadian researcher participation in a new series of workshops built around themes of special interest both to LACRO and the Latin American research community. Such themes might include discussion of decentralization, policy development and communications. By hosting workshops of this sort, LACRO would introduce Canadians to colleagues from a diversity of Latin American countries and the contacts could well lead to new collaborative partnerships.
- Latin American organizations such as CONICYT and CINDA expressed enthusiasm for Canadian attachments to research initiatives operating under their jurisdiction. Funding subsidies and other supporting resources are available for this purpose and the chief obstacle is the absence of a mechanism to keep the Canadian and Latin American research communities informed.
- It is strongly suggested that both LACRO and Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada should establish one- or two-year positions which would be occupied by a Canadian academic with a broad knowledge of Canadian university research capacity. The academic attachment within the Canadian Embassy in Beijing could serve as a

prototype. Position holders would be given the responsibility to inform themselves about Latin American research activities. Once informed, they would help make appropriate connections to research sources in Canada.

4.4 Thematic Area Three: Student Exchange

Student exchange and student mobility programs should play a key role in fostering inter-generational equity, co-development and long-term linkages. In much the same way that funds are available to support researcher exchange, the means to promote student mobility are easy to identify.

Fellowship programs promoting Latin American graduate student enrolment in Canadian universities are available from a variety of sources. The CONICYT in Uruguay utilizes an Inter-American Development Bank loan for this purpose and 525 Uruguayan graduate fellows are presently studying outside the country. For its part, the Chilean CONICYT offers funding for 45 PhD fellowships annually. Given the lack of information about Canadian universities, Canada has seldom been a preferred overseas destination in the past.

- There is keen interest in finding placements for Latin American graduate and post-doctoral fellows in Canadian institutions. For example, Universidad Católica del Uruguay has organized internal resources, CONICYT support, and OAS funds to sponsor studies abroad as a component of his university's emphasis on faculty upgrading.
- Other Latin American institutions, such as CINDA, are promoting graduate student participation in foreign research degree programs in addition to student mobility programs involving CINDA member universities. CINDA also is open to assisting Canadian graduate students locate appropriate research attachments in Latin America.
- International co-operative education programs for undergraduate and graduate students represents a relatively untapped resource that can be deployed (at minimal cost) to encourage student mobility. Canadian businesses operating in the region should be encouraged to accept co-op student placements from both Canadian and Latin American universities.
- Field Schools offer another cost-effective vehicle for introducing Canadian students to Latin America. As a means of creating greater understanding over the long term, Field Schools provide students with a unique educational experience, for which they are prepared to pay the full cost. The Universidad Católica de Chile, for example, offers a packaged program for international students that includes an introduction to Latin American studies, Spanish language instruction, and a home stay program. Another Field School model used by some Canadian universities allows partner universities in Latin America to provide credit instruction to cohorts of Canadian students who pay tuition at Canadian rates in return for the instructional service. The tuition is held in trust at the Canadian university and is used to offset the cost of the partner institution's graduate students or faculty researchers visiting Canada.

- Using LACRO as an example, two-way student mobility programs could be developed at marginal cost by earmarking appropriate funds within the budgets of existing activities. Some possibilities include:

Providing Latin American and Canadian graduate students with invitations to participate in LACRO-supported research projects by insuring that each major project includes a budgetary provision to facilitate their involvement.

Organizing student participation in the regional workshops of LACRO Project leaders.

Establishing an internship position for a graduate student Research Officer at LACRO headquarters.

4.5 Research Programs and Specialized Networks

For researcher and student exchanges to evolve into long-term joint activities, effective strategies must be found to identify priority fields of mutual interest. One approach might be to involve Canadian and Latin American researchers at an early stage in an intermediary phase between the broad themes of IDRC interventions and specific research projects. This phase -- a program definition phase -- should allow experts to work together in elaborating long-term research programs which correspond to mutually shared priorities, expertise, and capacities. Such an approach might also help lever support from national granting agencies.

For researcher and student exchanges to evolve into longer-term research collaborations and joint activities, effective strategies must be found to identify priority fields of mutual interest.

One approach may be to more systematically involve Canadian and Latin American researchers at an early stage of conceptualization. Creating an intermediary phase between the broad themes of IDRC interventions and the specific research projects may be one approach. This phase - a program definition phase - should allow for experts to work together to elaborate long-term research programs which correspond to mutually shared priorities, expertise and capacities. In this manner, support from national granting agencies could be leveraged by all participants.

As a support structure for such research programs, institutionalized multilateral networks of researchers can serve not only to carry forward jointly identified research activities, but further their growth within each national community.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Canada's future is linked to its hemispheric location. Whether or not this future will be prosperous and stable depends in large measure on our capacity to work collaboratively in key areas of mutual interest with Latin American partners.

Cooperation and exchange involving academics and researchers needs to become a major focus for Canada's policy vis-à-vis the region.

As underlined in the report, several organizations, institutions and many individuals are already directly or peripherally engaged in the endeavour of promoting academic and research collaborations with Latin America. For some it is part of their more general mandate, for others the region is a specific focus. In order for Canada and our Latin American colleagues to reap benefits from joint actions, there needs to be a greater effort toward concertation. IDRC, its LACRO office and the community represented by AUCC must play a strategic role in strengthening the knowledge foundation necessary in its own right and for other relations to flourish.

Notwithstanding the obvious limitations of this mission, the team offers the following general recommendations:

- Canada must find ways to increase scholarly interaction among individuals and institutions in Canada and Latin America; it must further ensure that such interaction involves young researchers on both sides.
- The team recommends that IDRC-LACRO examine this report's suggested thematic approach to build a knowledge foundation for hemispheric relations. As a first step, and in collaboration with AUCC, IDRC-LACRO should fund a pilot program focusing on activities which facilitate research encounters and build familiarity between scientific communities.
- The pilot program must be accessible to all Canadian researchers and operate under rules of peer review and transparent selection processes. The pilot needs also to encourage information sharing and mutual support among the various Canadian actors interested in Latin America.
- Other missions to the region, as well as an evaluation of the pilot project by a joint AUCC-IDRC team, could serve to determine the value of the model proposed in this report for expanding international research dialogues and cooperation.

LACRO Discussion Series

1. *Potential for Partnership*, Tim Draimin - July, 1994.
2. *LACRO Survey: The Role of Regional Office*, R. Bazzani, C. Seré and A.D. Tillett - October, 1994.
3. *A New Research Dialogue: Canadian and Latin American Research Communities*, Eva Egron-Polak, Jean-Pierre Lemasson, Gregg Macdonald - November 1994.